

about Washington this year, and I think they deserve a little consideration.

There was "Leaving Los Alamos," "You've Got Subpoenas,"—[laughter]—"Throw Momma in the Grand Jury." One of my favorites, the prequel to "Star Wars," "The Robert Fiske Story"—[laughter]—and "Saving Private Life." [Laughter]

Now that this speech has gone on long enough, I know we should work together to bring it to closure. So I want you to let me say something, just for a moment, serious. There are three journalists here tonight from Radio Free Asia who sought to cover my trip to China last year but had their visas canceled by the Chinese Government. I was pleased to sit for an interview with them before I left and took the opportunity to say that China had made a serious mistake.

This, of course, is part of a larger problem, because around the world, still, journalists are barred, harassed, imprisoned, sometimes even murdered, for the crime of seeking and speaking the truth. When leaders in China or anywhere else do this, it is a cause for dismay. And what leaders everywhere must realize is that a robust and independent press actually strengthens a nation. It promotes debate, and in a free society, given enough time, the people pretty much always get it right.

Together we must continue to state forcefully our belief that free expression and independent journalism are absolutely essential to building better societies and protecting the rights of all people. In the daily push and pull of our jobs and lives, we should never lose sight of that one goal, which I know every person in this room shares, not only tonight but every night.

All in all, this hasn't been too bad. I'd do it again. In fact, I'm dumb enough to do it again tomorrow. So I'll see you tomorrow in the East Room. Look for me. I'll be the guy without the red sash. [Laughter]

Thank you, and good night.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:30 p.m. in the International Ballroom at the Washington Hilton. In his remarks, he referred to Jim Mills, president, Radio and TV Correspondents Association; Evelyn Thomas, CBS News; former Attorney General nominee Zoe Baird; Helen Thomas, United Press International; Sam Donaldson, ABC News; Wolf

Blitzer, CNN; radio entertainer Garrison Keillor; Gov. Jesse Ventura of Minnesota; boxers Evander Holyfield and Lennox Lewis; Chris Matthews, CNBC; and chef Wolfgang Puck. Actor Nick Olcott appeared as the Prime Minister of the fictional nation of Carjackador.

Digest of Other White House Announcements

The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

March 13

In the afternoon, the President traveled from Texarkana, TX, to Little Rock, AR, and in the evening, he returned to Washington, DC.

March 15

The President announced his intent to nominate Brian E. Sheridan to be the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict.

March 16

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Stuart, FL, and in the evening, he returned to Washington, DC.

The White House announced that the President will travel to Detroit, MI, and Boston, MA, on April 16.

March 17

In the afternoon, the President met with Prime Minister Bertie Ahern of Ireland in the Oval Office.

In the evening, the President met separately with Deputy First Minister Seamus Mallon of the Northern Ireland Assembly, Ulster Unionist Party leader David Trimble, and Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams in the Oval Office.

March 18

The President announced his intent to appoint Iris J. Burnett as a member on the Board of Governors for the United Services Organizations, Inc.

March 19

In the morning, the President met with Senate leaders in the Oval Office to discuss issues regarding Kosovo.

In the afternoon, the President held a news conference in the East Room.

In the evening, he attended a Democratic National Committee dinner in a pavilion on the South Lawn.

Nominations Submitted to the Senate

The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

Submitted March 15

Raymond C. Fisher,
of California, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit, vice David R. Thompson, retired.

Adalberto Jose Jordan,
of Florida, to be U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of Florida, vice Lenore Carrero Nesbitt, retired.

Submitted March 18

Brian E. Sheridan,
of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense, vice Henry Allen Holmes.

Checklist of White House Press Releases

The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

Released March 15

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of a press briefing by Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Susan

Rice and NSC Senior Director for African Affairs Gayle Smith on the U.S.-Africa Partnership for the 21st Century

Statement by the Press Secretary: The President's Council on Food Safety/National Academy of Sciences Report

Announcement of nomination for U.S. Court of Appeals Judge for the Ninth Circuit and nomination of U.S. District Judge for the Southern District of Florida

Released March 16

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Released March 17

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcripts of press briefings by Deputy National Security Adviser Jim Steinberg on the President's schedule on Saint Patrick's Day

Released March 18

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Joe Lockhart

Transcript of remarks by Vice President Al Gore to the National Newspaper Publishers Association

Acts Approved by the President

Approved March 5¹

H.R. 433 / Public Law 106-1
District of Columbia Management Restoration Act of 1999

Approved March 15

H.R. 822 / Public Law 106-2
To nullify any reservation of funds during Fiscal Year 1999 for guaranteed loans under the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act for qualified beginning farmers or ranchers, and for other purposes

¹ This Public Law was not received in time for inclusion in the appropriate issue.